Socio-Cultural Factors Inhibiting Female Participation in Sports in Secondary Schools in Egbedore Local Government Area, Osun State. Nigeria

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Abstract

The study examined the socio-cultural factors inhibiting female participation in sports in secondary schools in Egbedore Local Government Area, Osun State. The objective of this study was to investigate the socio-cultural factors inhibiting female participation in sports. A descriptive research design of the survey type was employed for this study. The population of the study comprised 599 female students in secondary schools in Egbedore LGA Osun State. Simple random sampling technique was used to select all the 300 hundred (300) female students consisting of 134 female students in JSS classes and 166 female students in SSS classes representing 50% of the total population. Researcher's designed questionnaire was used to elicit data. The questionnaire was validated by three experts from the Department of Human Kinetics Education and Educational measurement which was tested for reliability; a co-efficient of .76 was obtained through test-retest method using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation. Questionnaire was administrated and collected by the researchers. The null hypotheses were analyzed using of Chi-square statistics at 0.05 alpha level. The findings of this study revealed that; that there was significant influence of religious practice, gender constraints and cultural practice on sports participation among female students in secondary schools in Egbedore LGA, Osun State. With cal,v (70.160) > crit.v (16.92), calc.value (39.347) > crit.value (16.92) and calc. value (99.200) > crit. value (16.92) at 0.05 alpha level and 9 degree of freedom respectively. It was concluded that; there is significant influence of religion, gender constraints and cultural practice on sports participation among female students in secondary schools in Egbedore LGA of Osun State. It was recommended that, school administrators should not allow religious and cultural practices to influence sports participation among female students in secondary schools in Egbedore LGA Osun State.

Keywords: Inhibiting, Socio-cultural, Sports participation and Factors.

Introduction

Sport is a universal phenomenon that encompasses all the facets of human endeavour, which appeal to men and women of all ages, gender, religion, culture or creed. Albueku (2011) defined sport as a dynamic social force, an institutionalized physical activity usually requiring the demonstration of physical process and involving competition between individuals or groups, who play to win under certain predetermined rules. Sports is the activities involving power and

skills, competition, strategy, and (or) chance, and engaged in for the enjoyment, satisfaction and (or) personal gain (Öcal, 2006). Sports play very important roles in educational institutions in virtually all parts of the world, and the contribution of sports to the educational process in institutions cannot be overemphasized (Ongonga, Okwara, & Okello, 2010).

Smoll and Smith, (2002) believed that involvement in organized sports activities allows young people to learn many of life lessons and develop desired attributes within the mainstream society. Engagement in school sports programmes is supposed to promote boys' and girls' moral functioning, self-discipline, ability to work with others, and capacity to compete and effectively cope with success as well as failure (Mahoney, Eccles, & Larson, 2005). Adedeji (2005) explained that sports participation is a means of correcting physical illness, a medium for cultural change. Also, sports is wholesome, mentally stimulating and socially sound. Sport as a social agent brings people of different sexes, ages, cultures and religious settings together as participating athletes and spectators alike make use of their free time to entertain themselves being an instrument of promoting unity, understanding and fostering peace among people.

Empowerment of girls is often overlooked because sport is not universally perceived as a suitable or desirable pursuit for girls. Existing social constructs of masculinity or socially accepted ways of expressing what it means to be a man or woman in a particular socio-cultural context play a key role in determining access, levels of participation, and benefits from sport. It is true in all countries that girls are less likely than boys and men to participate in sports, and sport continues to be dominated by males. Kjonniksen and Wold (2008) explained that through structured sport programmes, girls can become more physically active, benefiting their physical and mental health, including the reduced risk they will suffer from chronic diseases, depression and anxiety, and engaging in health risk behaviours. Sport can also be a powerful health information and education platform, connecting girls with the information, skills and strategies they need to reduce health risks in their lives, particularly in connection with their sexual and reproductive health. Sport can help increase self-esteem by giving female the opportunities to learn new skills, engage in positive relationships, engage in volunteer service and receive public recognition. In contrast to the expectation of sport for all, most female experience role conflict and this is reflected in the attitude of the general public regarding female participation in sports in Nigeria. Female's participation in sporting activities has for a long time been relatively low

compared with men due to differential treatment based on socialized gender roles and expectations. Consequently, the traditional images of gender in Nigeria have often worked against women's participation in sport. This perhaps, extensively reduces already existing opportunities available for women to be involved in sports (Adesoye, 2012).

Klun and Mala (2009) reported that women in Nigerian communities were not active sport participants and not regard sport as conducive to their physical wellbeing. Also, most communities in Nigeria especially rural ones, cultural beliefs and attitudes have strong influence on low participation of women in sports. Besides, organization of sporting activities in most communities is usually focused on combative sports, such as boxing, wrestling, archery and shooting. These sports are mainly participated by men and tend to discriminate against women. While some cultures strengthen the practice and propagate sporting programmes in their communities, others do not for reasons they considered against their religious inclinations. Islam and Christianity are religions that are alien to African cultures especially the stoppage of the killing of twins that was in practice in Africa before the coming of Mary Slessor to Nigeria and the introduction of Western Education to Africa and abolition of slave trade (Zakus & Daniel, 2007).

Babatunde (2005) define religion as a cultural universal with a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, uniting into a single moral community all those who adhere to those beliefs, values and practices. Religion is an institutionalized system of symbols, beliefs, values and practices that focuses on questions or ultimate meaning. Religion as a cultural heritage is evident as it often seems out of culture of a given society. Religion, as a belief and the practicing of particular system of faith coupled with the social attributes of organizations and relations between people and communities, play great roles in determining acceptable standards, customs, traditions, religious practices and beliefs have modelled the woman's image worldwide and the suitability of activities they engage in. Ikulayo & Adekoya, (2006) viewed female participation in sport as anti-religious. Sports wears are often smart-looking and could be offensive to some religious faithful, Oworu (2005) stressed further to agree with the earlier statement that in some parts of the Nigeria, women are forbidden to expose themselves beyond the knees and elbows. Such women find it difficult to participate in sports which would require

them to wear shorts, skirts and sleeveless vests. Example of such cases can be viewed in Sokoto state in 2000, in Zanfara and some Northern part of Nigeria.

Ogunleye (2009) further stressed that female especially, the adults is expected to cover all ther body from head to the legs. So the type of dress used by sports women which expose them from the "top to the bottom" are not acceptable by come religion. According to Ogunleye (2009) religious belief of an individual has a strong influence on his attitude toward issues. The implication of this is that various religious doctrines might have strong influence on women's participation in sports. In contrast to the expectation of sport for all, women experience role conflict and this is reflected in the attitude of the general public regarding female participation in sports in Nigeria. Women's participation has for a long time been relatively low compared with men due to differential treatment based on socialized gender roles and expectations.

Consequently, the traditional images of gender in Nigeria have often worked against women's participation in sport. This perhaps, extensively reduces already existing opportunities available for women to be involved in sports (Adesoye, 2012). Klun and Mala (2009) reported that most women in Nigerian communities were not active sport participants. According to them these women did not regard sport as conducive to their physical wellbeing. Klun further showed that in most communities in Nigeria, especially rural ones, cultural beliefs and attitudes had strong influences on low participation of women in sports. Besides, organisation of sporting activities in most communities is usually focused on combative sports, such as boxing, wrestling, archery and shooting. These sports are mainly participated in by male and tend to discriminate against female. Despites all the benefits listed in participating in sports, it is observed that majority of the female students in Egbedore Local Government Area of Osun State are not participating in sports. This worrisome situation has kindled the researcher's interest in investigating the socio-cultural factors inhibiting female students' participation in sports in secondary schools in Egbedore Local Government Area of Osun State.

Research Questions

The following researcher questions were formulated to guide the study;

1. What is the influence of religion on sports participation among female students in secondary schools in Egbedore Local Government Area, Osun State?

2. What is the influence of Gender constraints on sports participation among female students in secondary schools in Egbedore Local Government Area, Osun State?
3. What is the influence of Cultural difference on sports participation among female students in secondary schools in Egbedore Local Government Area, Osun State?

Null Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were postulated for the study;

1. There is no significant influence in the mean responses of JSS female students and SS female students on religious practices and sports participation in secondary schools in Egbedore Local Government Area Osun State.
2. There is no significant influence in the mean responses of JSS female students and SS female students on gender constraints and sports participation in secondary schools in Egbedore Local Government Area Osun State.
3. There is no significant influence in the mean responses of JSS female students and SS female students on cultural practices and sports participation in secondary schools in Egbedore Local Government Area Osun State.

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive research method. The population of the study was made up of 599 female students in all 20 secondary schools in the 10 wards in Egbedore local Government Area, Osun State. Multi-stage sampling procedure was adopted and Egbedore L.G.A was stratified in to 10 Wards. Simple random sampling technique was used select four out of the 10 wards in the Local Government Area. A sample size of 300 respondents was selected consisting of 134 female students in JSS classes and 166 female students in SS classes. The secondary schools were stratified to public and private. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 3 schools each from the private and public secondary schools making six secondary schools that were sampled for the study. A 12-items questionnaire was developed tagged "socio-cultural factor questionnaire" (SCFQ) which was used to collect relevant information pertaining to the hypotheses formulated for the study. The Questionnaire was

divided into two sections; Section "A" obtained information on demographic data of the respondents while Section "B" consisted of specific items to elicit responses on socio-cultural factors inhibiting sports participation among female students in secondary schools in Egbedore LGA Osun State. The research instrument for this study was validated by three experts in the Department of Human Kinetics and Educational measurement. A test-retest method of reliability was employed for testing. Twenty of the instrument was administered at two weeks interval; the test was analyzed with inferential statistic of Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) at 0.05 alpha level, a reliability co-efficient of .76 was obtained. The researcher with the aid of three trained research assistants administered the questionnaire to the respondents. The administered questionnaires were collected immediately after completion and all the necessary information was duly entered by respondents. The information obtained through the administered questionnaire and the data collected in the study was analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentages to analyze demographic data of the respondents while inferential statistics of Chi-square was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level.

Hypotheses Testing

Null Hypothesis 1.

There is no significant influence in the mean responses of JSS female students and SS female students on religious practices and sports participation in secondary schools in Egbedore Local Government Area Osun State

Table I: ***Chi-square analysis testing the influence of Religion on sports participation among female students in Egbedore LGA Osun State***.

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	N	Cal.x^2.V	df	Crit.V	Decision
1	Religious practice forbids female from participating in sports in secondary school	136	94	46	24 300					
2	Participating in sports exposes sensitive parts of female students which is against the religion doctrine.	144	92	42	22 300					

3	female should not engage in sports with men for religion reason	106	96	66	32 300	70.160	9	16.92	Rejected
4.	female should participate in sports where they can only be watch by female students or teachers only	74	122	56	48 300				

P < 0.05 alpha level

Table 1 revealed that the calculated Chi-square value of 70.160 at a degree of freedom of 9 is greater than the critical value of 16.92 at 0.05 alpha level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis that says that there is no significant influence of religion on sports participation among female in secondary schools in Egbedore L.G.A. was rejected. This implies that religion influences participation in sports among female students.

Null Hypothesis 2.

There is no significant influence in the mean responses of JSS female students and SS female students on gender constraints and sports participation in secondary schools in Egbedore Local Government Area Osun State.

Table 2: ***Chi square analysis testing the influence of gender constraints on sports participation among female students in Egbedore LGA Osun State***.

S/N	Items	**SA**	**A**	**D**	**SD**	**N**	**Cal.x^2.V**	**df**	**Crit.V**	**Decision**
5	Gender discourages female students from participating in sports	100	96	66	38	300				
6	Sports are not meant for girls because of the body shape.	98	86	82	34	300				
7	Female students are expected to be at home and take care of domestic duties not learn how to play sports	64	122	70	44	300	39.347	9	16.92	Rejected
8.	Female's body structures does not fit sports as they could easily sustain injury	54	138	40	68	300				

P < 0.05 alpha level

Table 2 revealed that the calculated chi-square value of 39.347at a degree of freedom of 9 is greater than the critical value of 16.9 at 0.05 alpha level of significance therefore, the null hypothesis that says that there is no significant influence of gender constraints on sports participation among female in secondary schools in Egbedore L.G.A. was rejected. This implies that gender constraints influence participation in sports among female students.

Null Hypothesis 3

There is no significant influence in the mean responses of JSS female students and SS female students on cultural practices and sports participation in secondary schools in Egbedore Local Government Area Osun State.

Table 3: ***Chi-square analysis testing the influence of cultural practice on sports participation among female students in Egbedore LGA Osun State.***

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	N	Cal.x^2.V	df	Crit.V	Decision
9	cultural practice does not permit female students from participating in school sports	142	78	56	24	300				
10	Some culture sees female doing sports as a taboo as it exposes sensitive parts of their body.	34	32	104	130	300				
11	female should not engage in sports with men for cultural influence	16	26	136	132	300	99.200	9	16.92	Rejected
12	Some culture forbid men watching female participating in sports	18	26	130	126	300				

P < 0.05 alpha level

Table 3 revealed that the calculated chi-square value of 99.200 at a degree of freedom of 9 is greater than the critical value of 16.9 at 0.05 alpha level of significance. Therefore the null hypothesis that says that there is no significant influence of cultural practices on sports participation among female in secondary schools in Egbedore L.G.A. was rejected. This implies that cultural practice influence participation in sports among female students.

Discussion of findings

The hypothesis 1on Table 1 was rejected meaning that religion has influence on female student's participation in sports in secondary school in Egbedore L.G.A. of Osun State. This result is in line with the assertion from Klun and Mala (2009) that cited that women in Nigerian communities were not active sport participants. According to them these women did not regard sport as conducive to their physical wellbeing. Klun and Mala further showed that in most communities in Nigeria, especially rural ones, cultural beliefs and attitudes had strong influences on low participation of women in sports. Besides, organization of sporting activities in most communities is usually focused on combative sports, such as boxing, wrestling, archery and shooting. These sports are mainly participated by men and tend to discriminate against women.

The result from table 2 also showed that gender has a significant influence on female students' sports participation in secondary schools in Egbedore LGA, Osun State. This finding is in accordance with the reports of Ikulayo and Adekoya,(2006) that religion, as a belief and the practicing of particular system of faith coupled with the social attributes of organizations and relations between people and communities, plays great roles in determining acceptable standards, customs, traditions, religious practices and beliefs. Ikulayo et-al asserted that women have modeled their image worldwide based on the suitability of activities they engage in also as they viewed female participation in sport as anti-religious. Sports wears are often smart-looking and could be offensive to some religious faithful, Oworu (2005) stressed further to agree with the earlier statement that in some parts of the Nigeria women are forbidden to expose themselves beyond the knees and elbow. Such women find it difficult to participate in sports which would require them to wear shorts, skirts and sleeveless vests**.**

Result from Table 3, showed that there is a significant influence of culture on female students' sports participation in secondary schools in Egbedore L.G.A. of Osun State. The significant of culture to female students' sports participation is in line with the work of Allender and Foster (2006) that noticed sports as an integral part of the culture of almost every nation. Empowerment of girls is often overlooked because sport is not universally perceived as a suitable or desirable pursuit for girls. Existing social constructs of masculinity or socially accepted ways of expressing what it means to be a man or woman in a particular socio-cultural context play a key role in determining access, levels of participation, and benefits from sport. It

is true in all countries that girls are less likely than boys and men to participate in sports, and sport continues to be dominated by males.

Conclusion

Religious practice, gender constraints and Cultural practice had significant influence on sports participation among female students in Egbedore L.G.A. of Osun State.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended that;

1. School administrators should not allow religious practices to influence sports participation among female students in Egbedore LGA Osun State.
2. Engaging in sporting activities have health and physical benefit for both male and female, effort should be made by all, especially, the female to participate in sports.
3. School authority, parents and guidance should not allow cultural practices to influence participation in sports among female students in Egbedore LGA Osun State.

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